

University of Nebraska - Lincoln

DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln

Nebraska Bird Review

Nebraska Ornithologists' Union

9-2001

A Bird on the Shoreline

Shelly Clark

Nebraska Ornithologists' Union

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/nebbirdrev>



Part of the [Poultry or Avian Science Commons](#), and the [Zoology Commons](#)

Clark, Shelly, "A Bird on the Shoreline" (2001). *Nebraska Bird Review*. 313.

<https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/nebbirdrev/313>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Nebraska Ornithologists' Union at DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln. It has been accepted for inclusion in Nebraska Bird Review by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln.

A Bird on the Shoreline

My daughter tells me she doesn't believe in God.
Her words pour onto the supper table like milk spilling.
In measured silence
she waits for what I will say.
The evening news mumbles in the background,
dog scratching at the door.
I look out the window to September sky opening
its dark blue skirt of night. I tell her

the Piping plovers will be leaving soon, if they haven't
already.
Asking her, do you remember the first time we saw them
through binoculars,
on the broad sandbar new McConaughy?
You were eight or nine.
How you were the first one to spot the bird, its
pale sand color,
You knew to look for the black tail spot,
the whitish romp.
How you loved the story of their "broken-wing" act,
when Mother Piper, frightened,
pretends she's crippled, leading intruders away from the nest.
How all the way home we made its sound, *peep-lo, peep-lo*,
laughing at our silliness,
happy because we loved a new thing.

This bird, becoming more rare,
like this woman-child, eyes
gray-blue pools of shiny rain.

--Shelly Clark